

Appl. No. : 10/025,310 Amended claims
Amdt. dated Mar 5, 2004
Reply to the Office Action of Dec 23, 2003

CLAIMS

1. (canceled)

2 (currently amended). A device for introducing state changes in athletic activities

which comprises:

a time varying device state; said state being ~~logically equivalent to an integer number~~

~~comprised of a plurality of bits~~ comprised of at least one binary variable;

a display; said display ~~providing the translation of the device state to a form~~

~~interpretable by an athlete~~ presenting the device state in a form that the athlete

may interpret as a change in the athletic environment;

~~a plurality of configuration devices; said configuration devices setting the desired~~

~~manner of variation of the device state; a means for setting the device; said means~~

determining the timing and order in which the device transitions between device

states;

a controller; said controller reading the ~~settings of the configuration devices,~~

~~generating random variation~~ device settings, maintaining the device state in

accordance with those settings ~~and the generated variation~~, and communicating

the resulting time varying device state to the display;

an interruptible power source;

a durable case; said durable case being appropriate for an athletic activity.

3 (currently amended). A device according to claim ~~1~~ 2, wherein the controller utilizes

a microprocessor.

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4 (currently amended). A device according to claim ~~1~~ 2, wherein the display comprises sets of differently colored LEDs.

5-10. (canceled)

11 (currently amended). A method ~~whereby athletes train or compete,~~ for the training of athletes and the playing of athletic games comprising the steps of:

- (a) setting the manner in which the device state is to be varied in time;
- (b) ~~varying that device state in accordance with those settings while utilizing a random variation to determine state transitions timing and outcome~~ the device varying its state in accordance with those settings;
- (c) the device displaying said state to ~~one or more~~ the athletes in a form interpretable by them as a change of the environmental state within the context of the current athletic activity;
- (d) the athletes reacting to the provided environmental state information as appropriate for the current athletic activity.

12-21. (canceled)

22 (new). A device according to claim 2, wherein a dial controls the mean frequency of transitions between device states.

23 (new). A device according to claim 2, wherein a dial sets the minimum hold time spent in each device state before a transition is permitted.

24 (new). A device according to claim 2, wherein a switch sets the device state order to be sequential or random.

- 25 (new).** A device according to claim 2, wherein the occupancy values determine the average time spent in each device state.
- 26 (new).** A device according to claim 2, wherein the interruptible power source is a removable battery.
- 27 (new).** A device according to claim 2, wherein a switch may interrupt the power.
- 28 (new).** A device according to claim 2, wherein each set of LEDs is arranged in a ring around a conical case.
- 29 (new).** A device according to claim 2, wherein each set of LEDs has a different color.
- 30 (new).** A method according to claim 11, wherein the order of device states is random and the timing of the device state transitions is random.
- 31 (new).** A method according to claim 11, wherein the order of device states is sequential and the timing of the device state transitions is random.
- 32 (new).** A method according to claim 11, wherein the order of device states is random and the timing of the device state transitions is periodic.
- 33 (new).** A method according to claim 11, wherein the order of device states is sequential and the timing of the device state transitions is periodic.
- 34 (new).** A method according to claim 11, wherein the athletic activity is a soccer dribbling drill and the four states of the device correspond to the environmental states: “do not pass”, “pass on the right”, “pass on the left”, and “pass on either side”.
- 35 (new).** A method according to claim 11, wherein the athletic activity is a basketball drill and the four states of the device correspond to the environmental states: “left

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side layup”, “right side layup”, “shoot from the top of the key”, and “shoot immediately”.

36 (new). A method according to claim **11**, wherein the athletic activity is a baseball pitching drill and the four states of the device correspond to the environmental states: “throw a curve”, “throw a slider”, “throw a fastball”, “throw out the runner at first base”.

2. A device for introducing state changes in athletic activities which comprises:
 - a time varying device state; said state being comprised of at least one binary variable;
 - a display; said display presenting the device state in a form that the athlete may interpret as a change in the athletic environment;
 - a means for setting the device; said means determining the timing and order in which the device transitions between device states;
 - a controller; said controller reading the device settings, maintaining the device state in accordance with those settings, and communicating the resulting time varying device state to the display;
 - an interruptible power source;
 - a durable case; said durable case being appropriate for an athletic activity.
3. A device according to claim 2, wherein the controller utilizes a microprocessor.
4. A device according to claim 2, wherein the display comprises sets of differently colored LEDs.
11. A method for the training of athletes and the playing of athletic games comprising the steps of:
 - (a) setting the manner in which the device state is to be varied in time;
 - (b) the device varying its state in accordance with those settings;
 - (c) the device displaying said state to the athletes in a form interpretable by them as a change of the environmental state within the context of the current athletic activity;

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(d) the athletes reacting to the provided environmental state information as
appropriate for the current athletic activity.

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The following 2 pages are a full set of replacement sheets.

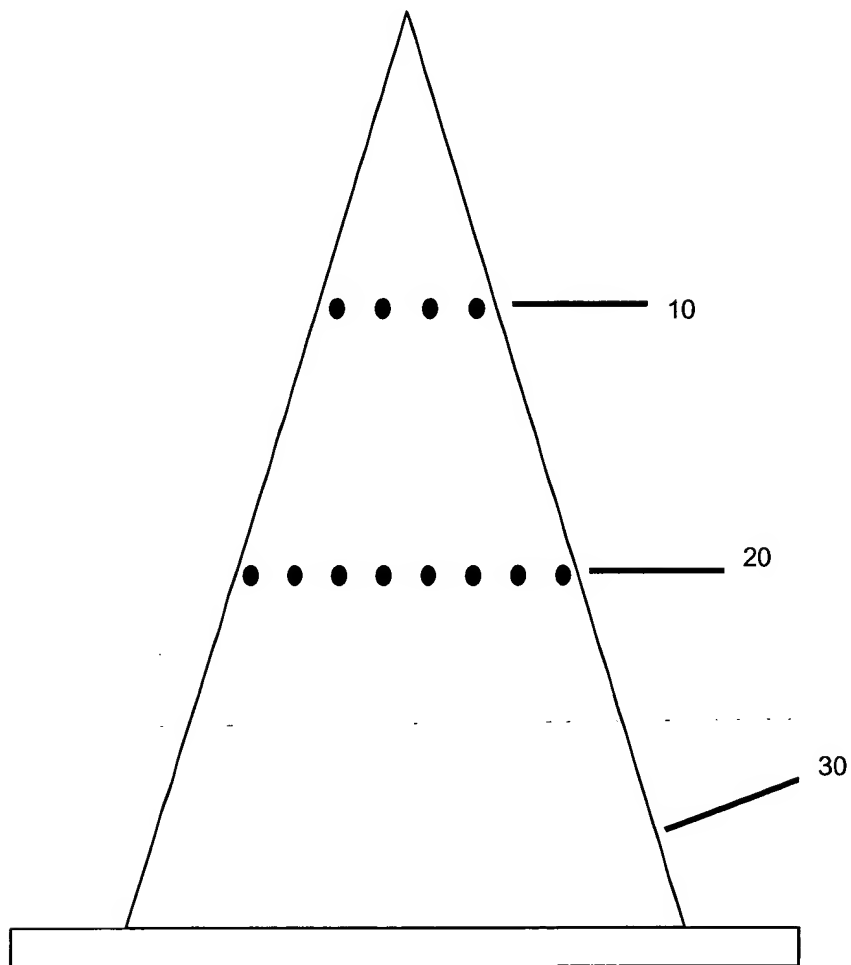
Figure 1 removed text. Numbers were retained and are unchanged.

Figure 2 removed text. Parts have been renumbered. Additionally, the power source (now **40**) has been redrawn as a battery whereas originally it was a rectangle.

Figures 3a, 3b, 4a, 4b, and 5, added in the first amended version, have been removed.

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FIGURE 1. The exterior of the invention – side view



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FIGURE 2. Block diagram of the mechanism

